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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father, we wait in reverence before Your throne. Cleanse us from our sins, creating in us clean hearts while renewing a right spirit within us.

Help our lawmakers today to discern Your voice and do Your will. Give them the ability to differentiate Your guidance from all others, permitting You to lead them to Your desired destination. Grant them, O God, minds to know, hearts to seek You, wisdom to find You, and conduct to please You. Speak to them through Your Word, guide them with Your Spirit, and sustain them with Your might.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate took the next step in allowing us to eventually pass a continuing resolution. While negotiations are ongoing, I want to thank colleagues on both sides for their cooperation in voting to proceed to the bill that will be used as a shell for the CR-

Zika legislation. This will allow us to start work so that when we have an agreement, we will be able to review and debate it.

We all know how important these funds are for combating Zika and supporting our veterans. Let's continue to work quickly so we can eventually pass an agreement as soon as possible.

OBAMACARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, my friend the Democratic leader has a favorite saying. He often says that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. I am not sure his fellow Democrats got the memo.

At a time when ObamaCare is raising health costs dramatically and chasing competition out of the health industry and collapsing on itself, Democrats just rolled out a brandnew health care idea to fix the problem that even they grudgingly admit is plaguing families. And what is their answer? More ObamaCare. No, this is not a joke. Democrats actually introduced legislation last week calling for ObamaCare 2.0, a new government-run health plan. It is not as if this is even a new idea. It is just a stale leftover from the health care debate back in 2009, an idea many Democrats once deemed so bad that it was cut from the final ObamaCare bill, but now it is their Hail Mary.

It is beyond tone deaf, and there are good reasons that so many in their own caucus will not support it. It is insulting to millions of Americans who continue to watch their premiums spike after Democrats said they would be lower. It is insulting to the millions of Americans who continue to watch their out-of-pocket costs shoot ever higher after Democrats said it would be affordable. I am sure Democrats will make plenty more promises to sell their latest bad idea; I am just not sure

the American people are in a mood to listen anymore.

Health care costs just rose last month by the largest amount in over three decades. Deductibles are outpacing wages, premiums are spiking by double digits just about everywhere and could even increase as much as 60 percent in some places. This is ObamaCare's legacy. It is a direct attack on the middle class. It is ruining lives and making life even harder for those who struggle already.

I have a message for our friends across the aisle: Remember what your leader likes to say about doing the same thing over and over. Stop denying reality, stop pretending this is somebody else's fault, own up to what you have done to the middle class, and then work with us to build a bridge away from it. ObamaCare is scary enough for America's middle class. The last thing Americans need now is some government-run sequel.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

OBAMACARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my entire caucus got the message. We understand Einstein's definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, and the over and over again, my friend should understand, is the fact that Republicans have voted 70 times to repeal ObamaCare, each time with the same result. My friend should know that every one of my Senators got the memo, as he said.

If someone would spend a minute each day flipping through the newspapers about health care, they would understand that ObamaCare has changed America for the better. Twenty million people now have the opportunity to go to the doctor when they

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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